

Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD)

This sheet is about exposure to lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) in pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This information should not take the place of medical care and advice from your healthcare provider.

What is LSD?

Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) is a drug that can cause an altered state of mind (hallucinations / delusions). Some physical effects of LSD include increased blood pressure, fast heart rate, and dilated pupils (when the black center of the eyes are larger than usual). LSD can be taken by mouth, by injection (using a needle), or by inhalation (breathing it into the lungs). Other names for LSD include “Acid”, “Kool-Aid”, “Blotter Paper”, “Heavenly Blue” and “Microdots”.

LSD has also been used to treat conditions such as depression and anxiety. This sheet will focus on non-medical use of LSD.

I am taking LSD, but I would like to stop taking it before getting pregnant. How long does the drug stay in my body?

People eliminate drugs at different rates. In healthy adults, it takes up to 2 days, on average, for most of the LSD to be gone from the body.

I take LSD. Can it make it harder for me to get pregnant?

It is not known if LSD can make it harder to get pregnant.

Does taking LSD increase the chance for miscarriage?

Miscarriage is common and can occur in any pregnancy for many different reasons. Based on the studies reviewed, it is not known if LSD increases the chance for miscarriage. Two studies from the early 1970s reported an increase in miscarriage with LSD use. However, the authors of these studies stated it is not confirmed that LSD use caused the miscarriages.

Does taking LSD increase the chance of birth defects?

Every pregnancy starts out with a 3-5% chance of having a birth defect. This is called the background risk. Based on the studies reviewed, it is not known if LSD increases the chance for birth defects above the background risk. Some small studies of LSD use in pregnancy did not find an increased chance of birth defects. There are reports of babies being born with birth defects after exposure to LSD, but there is little evidence that LSD caused those birth defects. No pattern of birth defects has been reported with LSD use during pregnancy.

Does taking LSD in pregnancy increase the chance of other pregnancy-related problems?

Studies have not been done to see if LSD increases the chance for pregnancy-related problems such as preterm delivery (birth before week 37) or low birth weight (weighing less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces [2500 grams] at birth).

Does taking LSD in pregnancy affect future behavior or learning for the child?

Studies have not been done to see if LSD can cause behavior or learning issues for the child.

Breastfeeding while taking LSD:

LSD has not been well-studied for use during breastfeeding. If you are taking LSD while breastfeeding and you suspect the baby has any symptoms, contact the child’s healthcare provider. Be sure to talk with your healthcare provider about all your breastfeeding questions.

If a male takes LSD, could it affect fertility (ability to get partner pregnant) or increase the chance of birth defects?

There is no data to suggest that LSD affects male fertility or increases the chance of birth defects above the background risk. In general, exposures that fathers or sperm donors have are unlikely to increase the risks to a pregnancy. For more information, please see the MotherToBaby fact sheet Paternal Exposures at <https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/paternal-exposures-pregnancy/>.

Selected References:

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